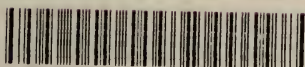


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FREEDOM AND NECESSITY:

A LECTURE,

DELIVERED IN KNOX' COLLEGE

ON THE 6th APRIL, 1870,

AT THE CLOSE OF THE COLLEGE SESSION.

BY

THE REV. GEORGE PAXTON YOUNG, M.A.,

PROFESSOR OF MENTAL AND MORAL PHILOSOPHY, KNOX' COLLEGE, TORONTO.



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The following Lecture was delivered in Knox' College at the close of last Session, and is now published at the request of some gentlemen who heard it, and who wish to have it placed in their hands, that they may consider at leisure the views which it contains.

Toronto, Canada,

18th April, 1870.

FREEDOM AND NECESSITY:

A LECTURE.

GENTLEMEN,

I purpose, in this Lecture, to inquire whether, and in what sense, men are free agents ; and whether, and in what sense, their actions are necessary.

In discussing these questions, we shall be groping in the dark, unless we have perfectly clear conceptions of what action is. I observe, therefore, that, by voluntary action I mean an exertion of energy by an intelligent being, a subjective putting forth of effort, in the direction of an end which is in the mind's view. In this definition, which I give, not with the idea that any definition can explain the nature of action, but simply to assist you to the exercise of that reflection through which alone the thing defined can be understood, the two essential points involved are, that voluntary action is a subjective determination, and that it is directed towards an end. Let us look at these a little more particularly.

In the first place, voluntary action is a subjective energy, issuing, no doubt, in certain objective results, but by no means to be confounded with these. For instance, I lift a glass of water, and raise it to my lips, and drink the water, in order to quench my thirst. As a number of separate movements may here be distinguished, let us fix attention on the first—the stretching forth of the hand to the glass ; and let us suppose that this is consciously done with a view to the quenching of thirst as the ultimate end to be attained. In such a case, the true action is not the outward movement, but the energy which is exerted by the being whom I call myself, and which results in the movement.

Of course, we describe the action by referring to the movement. We say : the hand is moved towards the glass. This

mode of speaking is all that the ordinary purposes of life require. But, if we desire to investigate the matter philosophically, we must look beneath the surface of verbal expression, and not derive our views of what actions are, from the language in which they are customarily described. The movement of the hand is the purely mechanical effect of certain muscular contractions and expansions, produced through the application to the muscles of the stimulus of the nervous force, in precisely the same way in which the convulsion of the limbs of a dead frog follow a galvanic shock. Such movement, therefore, is not my action, properly so called, but only a result connected, and not even proximately connected, therewith.

This is the first point:—voluntary action is a subjective energy. The next is:—it is directed to a definite end in the mind's view.

To say that voluntary action is consciously directed towards an end, is the same thing as to say that it is done from motive; the presence of a desirable end to the mind being what constitutes motive.

There is a class of philosophers who carry out the doctrine of Association, and of Habit, as depending on Association, in such a manner as leads them to assert, that voluntary actions may be done without motive. Utilitarian moralists, for instance, like Mr. John Stuart Mill, who believe in the existence of disinterested affections, are obliged to take this ground. For, their theory of life is, that pleasure is the only motive by which human beings can be influenced. And yet they believe in disinterested affections. How do they reconcile these seemingly inconsistent principles? They attempt to do so, by showing that disinterested affections are generated, mainly through the influence of association, out of a primitive root of pure regard for Self; and that, when they have been thus generated, the voluntary actions, in which they manifest themselves, are done from habit, without motive. Mr. Mill, after remarking that “a person of confirmed virtue, or any other person whose purposes are fixed, carries out his purposes without any thought of the pleasure he has in contemplating them, or expects to receive from their fulfilment,” adds: “this, however, is but an instance of that

familiar fact, the power of habit, and is in no wise confined to the case of virtuous actions. Many indifferent things, which men originally did from a motive of some sort, they continue to do from habit. Sometimes this is done unconsciously, the consciousness coming only after the action ; at other times, with conscious volition, but volition which has become habitual, and is put in operation by the power of habit."—Now, I am not at present arguing against Utilitarianism, though the view, for which I am contending, is, I believe, fatal to the Utilitarian theory. I am concerned solely with the assertion, that, when a certain course of conduct has become habitual, actions may be done with conscious volition, and yet without motive. This I cannot admit. For, why is anything called a motive ? Because, as it is in the view of the mind, it stimulates to action. Why do Utilitarians say that pleasure is a motive ? Because pleasure is an end which men aim at in the actions which they perform. No other possible account of motive can be given, than that it is the end—the ultimate or true end—aimed at, which, contemplated by the mind, stimulates to action. Well, then, if a good Samaritan, to whom the practice of benevolence has become habitual, aims at the relief of a suffering neighbour, without any thought of the pleasure that is to accrue to himself, or without the thought of any thing, except benefiting the sufferer, is not the desire of attaining this end the motive of his action, in precisely the same sense in which the desire of pleasure is the motive, where pleasure is the end sought ? I do not deny that habit may lead to spontaneous action, where no end is consciously sought, and therefore no motive felt. I object to Mr. Mill's statements, only in so far as they relate to voluntary action. Habit renders voluntary action, in an accustomed course, easy. It does so, by strengthening the impulses towards the line of conduct to which we have habituated ourselves, and rendering weak the opposing influences. The practice of benevolence, for example, may have become so habitual, that the claims of Self may have practically ceased to make their voice heard in the presence of distress calling for relief. But this is not the annihilation of motive. It is merely the triumph of one motive over another ; the *Veni, Vidi, Vici*, of a conqueror, who is scarce-

ly, if at all, conscious of the resisting forces, which pass away before his disciplined and imperial sweep.

Having thus endeavoured to make clear the true conception of voluntary action, I am now prepared to indicate, what, in my opinion, philosophy is competent to teach regarding the free agency of man, on the one hand, and the necessity of human actions, on the other.—I have asserted that men possess a power of voluntary action. In this lies their freedom.—I have said also that voluntary action is performed under the influence of motives ; and this, I believe, constitutes the sole necessity that governs human actions.—These two articles form the Thesis, which, in the remainder of the Lecture I am to develop and illustrate.

That men possess a power of voluntary acting, in the sense which has been described, is a proposition for the truth of which I can only appeal to consciousness. If I am conscious of any thing, I am conscious of being an agent ;—not indeed of producing any outward results, but of putting forth energy, with which experience shows that such and such outward results are connected. I am conscious, at one moment, of listening to catch a sound ; at another, of directing my eyes towards the countenance of a friend ; again, of endeavouring to lift a weight ; and, again, of resisting an impulse towards a particular gratification.

In saying that it is in the reality of this power of acting that freedom consists, I take a position different, in some measure, both from that of Edwards, and from that of Edwards' opponents. *They* hold that man's freedom is a Liberty of Indifference, in virtue of which, the mind, when solicited by a variety of motives, may choose any course, either this or that ; *he*, that it is liberty to do as we will ; a doctrine, which may, at first sight, appear to be much the same as the former, but nevertheless is quite distinct. Let us look at these theories a little more closely.

The so-called Liberty of Indifference is a supposed equilibrium of the Will, not indeed with respect to its inclination, but with respect to its power or ability to choose, in virtue of which, as I have said, when different motives present themselves, it can go either way. The ass, between the two bundles of hay, may be inclined towards the bundle on the

right; or it may be inclined towards the bundle on the left; but, to which ever side the needle of inclination point, the Will, with respect to its power of choosing, remains in equilibrium, so that it can select either the one direction or the other.—Such a doctrine, if the language in which it is expressed is to be taken with any degree of strictness, will not bear examination. For, the only ground on which the Liberty in question can be asserted, is the testimony of consciousness. If we are not conscious of a Liberty of Indifference, we can form no idea of what those mean, who contend for it. But we are not conscious of it. For, consciousness declares only what is. In regard to what may be, it is dumb. I am conscious of freedom in every thing that I do; in other words, I am conscious of being the real, and not the mere nominal, agent; but it is a contradiction in terms to speak of my being conscious of freedom, in regard to what is not being done, and never may be done.

Mr. J. S. Mill, after bringing forward, in opposition to the advocates of freedom, the argument which has just been stated, draws the conclusion, in a tone of considerable exultation, that the cause of freedom is lost. The appeal to consciousness, on which alone the assertion of freedom can be based, fails, because the circumstance which the witness is called to prove is one to which he cannot possibly depone. Mr. Mill's position here is impregnable, if the true conception of freedom be that which his argument assumes it to be. But I deny that this is the true conception of freedom. We are conscious of being free, not in respect of things which we are not doing and may never do, but in the actions which we perform. When we serve God, we serve him freely. When we commit sin, we sin freely. We are not forced to obey God. We are not forced to disobey God. We are conscious, when we obey, that we do it without constraint. We are conscious, when we disobey, that we do it without constraint. Consciousness, therefore, is a competent witness to human freedom, when the fact of freedom is rightly conceived; this fact being nothing more than the true and proper agency of the being whose freedom is asserted.

In reasoning against the dogma of Liberty of Indifference, I have taken the position, that we are conscious of *freedom in*

acting, but not of *freedom to act* in one or other of a variety of ways in which we are not acting at the moment. But it may be said : do we not speak perpetually of men being at liberty to adopt one or other of two courses that may be open to them ? I answer : we do. The language is popular ; it expresses briefly and intelligibly what is intended by those who use it ; and to object to it, in ordinary discourse, would be mere pedantry. I am at liberty either to leave the platform on which I stand, or to remain in my present position. Undoubtedly, I am. But what is here asserted is something altogether different from the Liberty of Indifference on which I have been remarking. The meaning is :—I have learned, from past experience, that certain motions of my limbs are consequent on certain subjective energies ; arguing, then, from the past to the future, I believe, that if I were at the present moment to put forth such and such energies, these would issue in movements of my limbs, in virtue of which I should step off the platform ; while, if the requisite energies be not put forth, I shall remain where I am. But, though I am convinced that the one result or the other shall take place, according as certain subjective energies are or are not exerted, the conviction is not a datum of consciousness ; it is an inference from experience, and one having nothing whatever to do with my free agency, properly so called, but only with the outward results which experience teaches us to connect with particular exertions of free agency.

In opposition to those who contend for an unthinkable Liberty of Indifference, Edwards represents our liberty as consisting in power to do as we will, or in (what he regards as being the same thing) the absence of hindrance to our doing as we will. How widely this is removed from the Liberty of Indifference, with which it might at first sight be confounded, will be apparent, when we attend to the meaning which Edwards attaches to the language he employs. By willing, he understands the choice or preference of the mind ; and, by doing, the result arising upon our choice, according to the constitution of things, we know not how. The choice, he calls an act of Will ; the result of the choice, a voluntary action ; thus (most unhappily, in my opinion) distinguishing an act of Will from a voluntary action. But

he admits that we are not conscious of the voluntary action ; we are conscious only of the act of Will, and of an expectation, founded on experience, that the action will follow. "There is nothing," he says, "which I am conscious of while I walk, but only of my preferring or choosing, through successive moments, that there should be such alterations of my external sensations and motions, together with a concurring habitual expectation that it will be so ; having ever found by experience, that on such an immediate preference such sensations do actually, instantaneously, and constantly arise." From this it is plain, that, when Edwards speaks of our being at liberty to do as we will, he does not mean that we are at liberty to choose one or other of two alternatives, or at liberty to do any thing, in the sense of exerting any subjective energy ; but what he means is this :—supposing our choice to have been made in a particular manner, if there is no hindrance in the way, to prevent our choice taking effect in those outward results which experience has taught us to connect with particular volitions, then, and in that regard, we are free. The example, by which he illustrates his doctrine, is : a bird, let loose, is at liberty to fly. Its cage being open, there is no hindrance to its flying.

I cannot but wonder at the laudations which this view of liberty has received from a host of eminent writers. In my opinion it has no merit whatever. On the contrary, by representing liberty as lying merely in the absence of hindrance to the effects of our actions, effects confessedly occurring beyond the sphere of consciousness, it tends to obscure and perplex the great truth, that there is a freedom of which we are conscious. No reasonings ever have been, or ever will be, able to drive out of men's minds the conviction that they are free ; free, not in the Edwardian sense, but with a liberty which belongs to their very nature as rational beings, and with which neither the presence nor the absence of hindrances to the motions of their limbs has any thing to do. A man bound in chains is a free agent, as truly as if the fetters were removed.—He is not free, you say, to cast off his chains. The bird is not at liberty to fly.—I answer : what you mean by this, is, that no efforts which the man can put forth would result in breaking his chains. Granted. But what has that

to do with the matter? You are merely asserting that certain external consequences would not follow from the man's actings. But the question of freedom, at least the only one worth discussing, is not, what consequences we are led by experience to believe would follow certain actions, but whether the subjective energies, which constitute our actions, are the unconstrained forth-puttings of a power inherent in Self; in other words, whether men are veritable, and not mere nominal, agents.

It is on the miserable view of freedom, which considers it as having reference to the results of action, rather than as lying in the reality of the power of acting, that Locke, with whose statements, on this point, the remarks of Edwards very closely coincide, proceeds in determining how far human freedom reaches. How far human freedom reaches! Are we not free, if free at all, in every action we perform? But let us hear Locke. Liberty, he tells us, is "the power in any agent to do or forbear any particular action according to the determination or thought of the mind, whereby either of them is preferred to the other." And from this conception of liberty he draws the conclusion that we are free, as far as we can produce results, but no farther. Thus, I am free to throw a quoit twenty yards, but not to throw it two hundred. Or, to give an illustration in Locke's own words:—"a man falling into the water (a bridge breaking under him) has not herein liberty, is not a free agent. For, though he has volition, though he prefers his not falling to falling, yet, the forbearance of that motion not being in his power, the stop or cessation of that motion follows not upon his volition, and therefore he is not free." It seems to me that the more correct account of such a case would be, that "herein" the man does not act at all, either freely or necessarily. The general statement, that liberty is the power which we have to do or to forbear any particular action, according to the preference of the mind, I could accept, if it meant no more than this, that we are free, in as much as we are veritable agents. But this is not Locke's meaning. He unambiguously uses the word action to denote, not the subjective energy which the living being exerts, but the result in which that energy issues. Of course, if any one chooses to

define action in this way, he can do so. And, if he chooses also to define freedom, so as to make it indicate merely the extent to which results follow our subjective exertions of energy, he can do so. But I repeat, that this is not the freedom of which we are conscious, since it is only from experience that we learn to connect certain results with our exertions of energy. And I say still farther, that it is not the freedom which forms the basis of our responsibility. We feel ourselves, as true agents, to be responsible for what we do ;—for the energies which we direct towards certain ends ; equally responsible whether the ends be attained or not.

With these remarks on the first Article of my Thesis, which places freedom in the possession of a veritable power of voluntary action, I proceed to the second, in which voluntary action is considered as prompted by motive.

A preliminary verbal explanation must here be made. We have seen that Edwards distinguishes voluntary action from act of Will ; meaning, by the latter, the act of the mind whereby we choose any thing ; and, by the former, the effect consequent upon our choice. On the view which I have taken of action, as a subjective energy, there is no distinction between act of Will, and voluntary action. An act of Will *is* a voluntary action ; and there is no other kind of voluntary action. I act, by willing. I bend my arm—in so far as I, the living being, do any thing in the case—by willing to bend it. Hence, in speaking of motives, it is immaterial whether we say, that they influence the Will, or that they prompt to action. The two statements are identical.

Can we, then, define the relation of motives to the Will, or to the conduct, more precisely than by simply saying, that motives influence the choice, or that men act from motives ? I do not believe that we can. But, as you are aware, philosophers of both the schools, whose views we have been examining, are of a contrary opinion. On the one hand, Edwards tells us, that the strongest motive determines the Will, according to a law of necessity. On the other hand, his opponents hold, that the mind, by whatever motives it may be solicited, possesses a self-determining power. It is my task to show, as I hope to be able to do, that a criticism of these conflicting theories leads to the conclusion, that there is no

truth held by the disputants on either side, which is not substantially held by both ; the system of neither party containing any positive thinkable truth, over and above what I have mentioned, that men act from motives.

The principle of Edwards is, that the strongest motive determines the Will. But, whatever there may be in this doctrine, we may at all events simplify the formula, by striking out the word "strongest." For, what is meant by strongest motive? There is no conceivable test, by which the relative strength of two contending motives can be estimated, except the actual result in which a struggle between them issues. A strain is brought to bear upon a cable. Which of the two forces is the stronger, the strain, or the tenacity of the rope? Wait, and you shall see. If the rope break; the former. If it do not break; the latter. So, (I suppose Edwards would say,) when two motives act upon the Will, we can judge of their relative strength by the result. Good. Then, the stronger motive is, by definition, that which prevails. And hence the formula: the strongest motive determines the Will, is reducible to this: the motive, which determines the Will, determines the Will;—a proposition, in which the utmost amount of truth that can possibly be contained, is, that the Will is determined by motives.

The word "strongest" seemed to be somewhat, but has turned out to be nothing. It has vanished; and the simplified formula remains in our hands: motives determine the Will.

Does this express any thing more than the fact, that voluntary action is performed from motive? To discover what more it expresses, if any thing, we must inquire what the determination spoken of is. It is explained to be a species of causal relation, in which motives stand to volition. In fact, the sole positive proof which Edwards gives for his doctrine, and therefore the sole means we have for ascertaining the precise import of that doctrine, is founded on the principle, that whatever comes to pass must have a cause. This, in substance, is also the one positive argument employed by Leibnitz, in his *Theodicée*, and in his correspondence with Clarke, in support of a conclusion similar to that of Edwards. We may safely assume, therefore, that it contains the whole gist of the matter.

Edwards explains that he employs the term cause "in a sense more extensive than that in which it is sometimes used." He defines it as "any antecedent, either natural or moral, positive or negative, on which an Event, either a thing or the manner and circumstance of a thing, so depends, that it is a ground or reason, either in whole or in part, why it is rather than not, or why it is as it is rather than otherwise." It is plain, that, in this definition, several things, of entirely distinct sorts, are brought together under a common name. A cause is any antecedent, on which the result depends in any way. But there may be various antecedents, on which the result depends in various ways; and therefore our volitions may have different causes, to which they are in different ways due. For instance, the sustaining power of the Creator, exercised from moment to moment, is a ground or reason why our volitions are, rather than not; for, if this sustaining power were withdrawn, we should cease to exist. The Divine power is the efficient cause, to which our existence, as beings possessed of the power of Will, is to be ascribed. I need not say that it is not in this sense that motives are held by philosophers of the school of Edwards to be the causes of our volitions. Neither are they considered to be of the nature of physical causes. What then? They are regarded as moral causes; and the necessity, which is conceived to attach to their operation, is a moral necessity.

You will keep in mind, that we are trying to discover, how much, if any thing, is contained in the proposition: motives determine the Will, beyond what is involved in the statement, that voluntary action is performed from motive. The nut of the question lies in the word "determine;" and we have got thus far in our process of clearing up what that word implies: we have ascertained, namely, that the meaning intended to be conveyed, is, that motives are the moral causes of our volitions, and that the necessity which attaches to their operation is a moral necessity. But what do the expressions, moral cause, and moral necessity, mean? I do not know that any other answer can be given, than that they denote the relation which subsists between the nature of an intelligent agent, and the ends, which, in given circumstances, he prefers, or the actions, which, under given circumstances, he

voluntarily performs. One person is tempted to steal a sum of money. He is a good man, and resists the temptation. Another is tempted to steal. He is a bad man, and gives way to the temptation. In general, the course which a person takes when certain ends, in any respect desirable, are present to his mind, will depend on the answer to the question : what sort of a person is he ? With given motives brought to bear upon you, you, being such a person as you are, act as you do ; whereas, if you had been a different sort of person, you would have acted differently.—This will probably be accepted by the most thorough-going disciples of Edwards as a substantially correct statement of what is most essential in the doctrine maintained by that writer. And now observe what it amounts to. A man's actions, in given circumstances, depend, according to a law of moral causation, on his nature. What the man does, flows, by moral necessity, from what he is. But what conception can we form of our nature, except through the actings which exhibit it ? We know what we are, only in knowing what we do. Actions are merely the evolution of nature,—nature unfolding itself. The doctrine of moral necessity, therefore, in so far as it pretends to go beyond the simple fact that men act from motives, is a mere truism. '*In presence of given desirable ends, a man must choose as he does.*' Of course, he must ; for, to suppose his choice to be different from what it is, would be to suppose that he is a different man from what he is. '*His actions must have a moral cause ; they must be according to his nature.*' Of course, they must ; for we conceive nature, as of this or that particular sort, only by conceiving the actions in which it develops itself. In admitting such statements and reasonings, we are manifestly admitting nothing, except that a man, being what he is, and being placed in the circumstances in which he is placed, acts with a view to the attainment of the ends, whose presence to the mind constitutes the motives, by which, on the Edwardian system, the Will is held to be determined.

We have seen, that, in the only true and intelligible sense in which motives can be said to determine the Will, the phrase expresses nothing more than that men act from motives. Let us now turn to the other side, and consider the

position of those who contend for a self-determining power of the Will.

What is this self-determining power? Edwards finds himself unable to conceive that the Will can determine itself to any particular act, otherwise than by a previous act. Why do I will in such a manner? Because I will. And why do I will to will in this manner? Because I will. And why do I will to will to will in this manner? Because I will. And so on we go, down the bottomless inclined plane of an infinite series of volitions, as the condition of any volition whatever taking place. If this be what is meant by the self-determining power of the Will, Self-determination is manifestly impossible.

But the advocates of the self-determining power would certainly not admit that their position is correctly stated, when they are represented as conditioning each volition on a previous volition. No doubt, they are accustomed to use such expressions, as, that we will in this or that manner, because we choose. But it would be unjust to press their language too closely, and to compel it to yield the signification, that every volition must be preceded by another. From their own expositions of their views, it may be gathered that the power of Self-determination, which they claim for the Will, is neither more nor less than that Liberty of Indifference, which (as we have seen) they ascribe to the Will. A man is solicited by two opposing motives; neither of these, prior to the man's choice, can be considered as essentially stronger than its competitor, so as necessarily to determine the choice that shall be made; but the man, while drawn to the right hand by the one motive, and to the left by the other, can choose either direction. In popular phrase, he can choose as he pleases; by which, however, is not meant that his choice is determined by a previous act of choice, but simply that he can choose either this or that. The question, therefore, whether the Will has a Self-determining power, is the same as the question, whether the Will has a Liberty of Indifference. Such Liberty I have already shown to be inconceivable. It is an unmeaning expression, unless it denote something of which we are conscious; but conscious of it we cannot possibly be, for consciousness does not tell us what we may or may not do, but only what we do. Other reasons

for rejecting the doctrine of Liberty of Indifference might easily be urged;—the readers of Edwards will remember with what afflictive minuteness he treats the subject;—but the single brief argument, that has been advanced, is, in my judgment, so unanswerable, that to add any thing to it would (to borrow a simile of a late President of the United States) be wasting powder on dead ducks.

If we cannot admit a Self-determining power of the Will, in the sense that each volition is conditioned on a preceding volition, or in the sense that the will is endowed, with a Liberty of Indifference, it will scarcely be alleged that there is any truth in the Self-determination theory, over and above this, that the mind, in its volitions, is under no constraint, but is itself the true and proper agent.

What is the conclusion of the whole matter? Edwards and his friends tell us that the strongest motive determines the will. Against this the objection lies, that the word “strongest” is at best a meaningless superfluity. But it is worse than superfluous, in as much as it tends naturally and almost irresistibly to convey the idea that the Will is somehow forced. For, let the position be laid down, that, of two opposite motives, by which the mind is urged, there is something in the one, as compared with the other, which can intelligibly be called superiority of strength, prior to any action that the mind may take; then the mind seems to be reduced to the condition of a balance, with a heavy weight in one scale, and a light weight in the other; and freedom is destroyed; in other words, the mind has no power of acting left to it. The word “strongest,” therefore, must be thrown overboard. Thus simplified, the doctrine of Edwards is, that motives determine the will. On the other side, it is held that the will determines itself. Who is in the right? Both parties are right, or neither is, according as their respective formulæ are interpreted.—‘*The Will determines itself.*’ True, if you mean that the mind, in its volitions, is under no constraint, but is itself the real and proper agent; but not true, or rather unintelligible, if you mean any thing else.—‘*Motives determine the Will.*’ True, if you mean that a man, walking (for instance) northward rather than southward, does it from some motive; but false or unintelligible, if you mean more.

It may perhaps be said, that, if the views, which I have advanced, are well founded, the controversy about man's free agency, and about the necessity that attaches to human actions, which has been so vehemently agitated, turns out to be a dispute about words. The whole thinkable truth, on the question under discussion, is contained (it seems) in the two propositions, that men are agents, and that they act from motives ; propositions not denied, either by Edwards, or by those against whom Edwards wrote. Have giants, then, been fighting for ages about nothing ? I answer, that I believe the contending parties to have been substantially agreed on the great facts of the case ; yet the contest between them was not therefore altogether about words. The arguments, on both sides, were directed largely, and, in this respect, to good purpose, against unreal conceptions, which had been associated with the reality held by both parties in common. Wishing to extend their knowledge beyond the facts which exist to be known, and by this means to provide a support for convictions that could have stood well enough on their own behalf, the philosophers, whom I have been venturing to criticise, evoked Chimæras from the abyss of inconceivability, and thrust these forward in front of the simple truth, as its main stay and hope ; here, the Chimæra of Strongest Motives ; there, the Chimæra of Liberty of Indifference ; phantoms, which were regarded, the one by the combatants on the one side, and the other by the combatants on the other, as inconsistent with the very life of the truth they had been summoned to defend ; and which certainly, as only darkening and defacing the truth by the smoke which they threw around it, behooved by all means to be driven from the field.

Throughout the whole of this Lecture, it has been assumed that the mental manifestations, of which we are conscious, are not the mere products of corporeal organization, but that, united with the body, there is in man an immaterial principle, the subject of thought and feeling, and the agent in volition. Were this denied, freedom, of course, could no longer be maintained ; for the phenomena of mind would be reduced to the rank of a special class of material phenomena ;—a very special and distinguished class, no doubt, but still subject to the same general law with the lower phenomena of

matter, and therefore necessary, in exactly the same manner in which the falling of a stone to the earth under the earth's attraction is necessary. Accordingly, those physiological psychologists, who either deny, or fail to recognise, the existence of an immaterial principle in man, are, with one consent, necessitarians, in a sense of the word necessity, in which necessity and freedom are incompatible with one another. We have an example of this in Professor Bain of Aberdeen. That writer's view of the Will is as follows. It has two fundamental constituent elements. The first is, the existence of a spontaneous tendency—the response of the system to nutrition—for movement to take place, independently of the stimulus of feeling. The second is, the law that connects pleasure with increased vitality, and pain with diminished vitality. The manner in which these laws combine to produce Will, the following quotation will explain: “We suppose movements spontaneously begun, and accidentally causing pleasure; we then assume, that, with the pleasure, there will be an increase of vital energy, in which increase the fortunate movements will share, and thereby increase the pleasure. Or, on the other hand, we suppose the spontaneous movements to give pain; and assume, that, with the pain, there will be a decrease of energy, extending to the movements that cause the evil, and thereby providing a remedy. A few repetitions of the fortuitous concurrence of pleasure and a certain movement will tend to the forging of an acquired connection, under the law of Retentiveness or Contiguity, so that, at a future time, the idea shall evoke the proper movement at once.” You will observe, that, in this theory of the origin of voluntary power, there is an entire ignoring of any thing that can properly be called the exertion of energy by the mind. All the stages through which Professor Bain conducts us, are such as might be laid down by one who did not believe that there is an immaterial principle in man, but who held that all the varieties of mental manifestation are merely the product of organization. Nutrition is received into the system. Nervous currents begin to flow. Movements follow. A movement accidentally leads to pleasure; this heightens the general vitality; and the fortunate movement shares in the increased vitality. Or, a movement leads to pain; this lessens the general vitality;

and the unfortunate movement shares in the diminution of vitality. Association comes in, and plays its part in strengthening the bonds between pleasure and pain, on the one hand, and certain movements on the other ; and the result is, that, ultimately, pleasure and pain, whether in fact or in idea, have a definite "volitional effect," in the way of tending to produce movements.—Into an examination of systems of this class, which contradict, as I believe, the most fundamental facts of human nature, I have not entered ; but I have limited myself to what has proved a sufficiently extensive field for a single lecture, an examination of the ground that must be taken, on the question of human freedom and of the necessity of human actions, by those who admit that there is a personal intelligent agent, distinct from the nervous forces, that flow in response to nutrition, and set the limbs in motion.

